

HIGHER ECCLESIASTICAL ACADEMY OF ATHENS

Placement Examinations 2026

Course: History of the Persons and Events of the Gospels

Selected bibliography for this subject:

- Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *Jesus of Nazareth* (3 book series), 1: Ignatius Press, 2008. 2: Ignatius Press, 2023. 3: Random House, 2012.
- John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, Harper One, 2009.

Examination Syllabus

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS

- From the realm of human physiology to the realm of revelation and miracle
- The First and the Last Adam
- The Virginity of the Virgin Mary and the Incarnation of the Word
- Son of Mary and Son of God

THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

- Birth in Bethlehem: Historical event and prophecy
- The chronology of the events

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI AND THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

- The Magi and the significance of their worship of Jesus
- The Star of Bethlehem and its interpretations

THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT AND THE MASSACRE OF THE INFANTS

- The deeper meaning of the Flight to Egypt
- The historicity of the Massacre of the Infants and its apocalyptic character
- Jesus, the New Moses

THE QUESTION OF THE “BROTHERS OF JESUS”

- The meaning of the term “brothers”
- Traditional and modern interpretations of the “brothers of Jesus”

JOHN THE BAPTIST, THE FORERUNNER OF THE LORD

- John the Baptist in the Gospels
- “The greatest among those born of women” and the least in the Kingdom of God
- The relationship between John and Jesus
- The place of the Forerunner in the Orthodox Church

THE MEETING OF JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

- John's "perception" of Jesus
- The attitudes of John and Jesus toward the Law
- The disciples of John and Jesus

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

- The baptism of John and the significance of Jesus' Baptism
- The moment of the Theophany and the descent of the Holy Spirit "like a dove"

THE WILDERNESS AND THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS

- The wilderness in the history of Israel and in the New Testament
- The significance of the three temptations of Jesus
- The temptation of biological (physical) needs
- The temptation of commercializing the spirit
- The temptation of power and worldly authority